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3. *Official Report of the Settlement of Port Denison.* By  
MR. ELPHINSTONE DALRYMPLE.

MR. DALRYMPLE gives a most satisfactory account of the successful establishment of the new settlement at Port Denison, in Queensland, Australia. He arrived there safely on the 10th of April, in command of the overland expedition, and found the party sent by sea, already encamped in tents along the shore. A flagstaff was then hoisted; the township survey was commenced, and progressed rapidly; fences and buildings quickly rose; order was kept by the native mounted police and others; and Mr. Dalrymple writes, on the 24th of April, "It is now most deeply gratifying to me to see the British flag flying over the spot which we found a wilderness; to see a small, but happy and orderly, population of men, women, and children, quietly settled, where a few days ago the wild aboriginal held undisputed sway; cattle and horses feeding over the rich virgin pastures, and the sounds of industry and civilization, marking the advance of another great wave of Anglo-Australian energy, from south to north." The route traversed by the expedition lay over a fine pastoral, hilly, and well-watered territory; and to the path left by the 140 horses and 121 cattle that composed it, is now added an excellently-marked "tree-line" of 130 miles from Port Denison to Fort Cooper.

Sir George Bowen, in forwarding this despatch, reports to the Duke of Newcastle that applications have already been made, chiefly by settlers from Victoria and New South Wales, for licences to occupy nearly the whole of the recently proclaimed pastoral district of Kennedy. This, alone, embraces a territory exceeding the area of England and Wales, and reaches within 300 miles of the Gulf of Carpentaria. He further adds, that it will probably be shortly his duty to open another extensive territory, lying to the west of Queensland.

After some remarks by COUNT STRZELECKI,

COLONEL GAWLER said it was quite refreshing to hear such a combination of facts accumulating in reference to long-despaired-of Australia. He would not occupy the time of the meeting by entering into collateral circumstances, but would proceed at once to those which had arisen since he personally visited Australia, when it became the object of his very ardent hopes—the opening of a line of communication from the south-east provinces to the north-west coast, by the way of the head of Spencer's Gulf. He thought that all who glanced at the map, and looked at the direction of the line of communication, and the wealthy countries beyond it, would see the great importance of the opening of that line, and, thanks to that fine fellow, that persevering fellow, Mr. Stuart, it might now really be considered as opened. It was to be remembered that the part of the country which proved an obstacle to Mr. Stuart's success in reaching the Victoria River was not more than 90 miles in width.

It was a dense forest, it was true; but while a dense forest was an obstacle to Australian travellers, it was no obstacle to backwoodsmen or the splitters of Australia. Half a dozen of those men would soon clear away masses of the 90 miles of the dense forest, supposing it continued the whole of the way, which was not likely. He believed they would cut a road at the rate of 3 or 4 miles a day, and, with a few well-diggers with them, they would be enabled to procure an abundance of water. Mr. Stuart estimated that three or four wells would be sufficient to make the way open to the Victoria. The difficulties of the southern part of the route were thought nothing of, and had been overcome with ease, so that they might fairly consider that the whole of the important line from the head of Spencer's Gulf to the north-western coast was open. They had, too, the satisfaction of considering that it was opening out a well grassed country. Of course, there were tracts of desert, where there were difficulties to be encountered—some there had been in England itself, such as the moorland between London and the South coast; but, altogether, the accounts were very extraordinary as to the beauty of the soil, the density of the grass, and the abundance of water. There could not be a more convincing evidence of the traversable nature of the country than the success which had already attended the efforts recently made to explore it. Mr. Stuart, starting at  $18^{\circ} 30'$ , reached  $28^{\circ} 30'$  in 50 days, a distance of 10 degrees in 50 days, which would average about 15 miles a day for his tired and worn out horses, and men who had long been reduced to four pounds of flour and one pound of dried meat a week. He attached peculiar importance to the exploration of a route that should connect Spencer's Gulf with the north-west of Australia, inasmuch as it lay directly in the line towards our Asiatic possessions, and abutted on excellent harbours. The speaker then recommended the careful perusal of Mr. Stuart's Journal, and expressed a hope that now that such progress had been made in exploring Australia, the British Government would step in and assist those who went to the country, by granting them titles and leases of the land which had been discovered, and give the white men as well as the black men some protection. He concluded by drawing attention to the activity which had been displayed by the Duke of Newcastle in forwarding the medal awarded to Mr. Stuart. It met him on his recent return to Adelaide, and not only stimulated him, but also the Government and the settlers, so that they were fitting him out with all activity, to enable him to proceed again to the north, to break through the last barrier which existed.

MR. BAKER said that Mr. Stuart had discovered a new country, which was superior to anything which he had passed through before, and had established the fact that the country was well supplied with water in every direction; in fact, he stated that the country could be travelled over at any time, and in any place, without the want of water or of feed for his horses. Mr. Stuart was going to start again, and he had such confidence in the country, that he was about to take 500 horses to the Gulf of Carpentaria, having found the country so well watered, and the grass in such abundance, as to be capable of sustaining them. He hoped, if any new colony should be established there after the arrival of Mr. Stuart, that the British Government would give him, as a reward for his services to the country, a large tract of the land, so that it might be handed down to future generations, to show that he, and those who had co-operated with him, were the discoverers of the country for the purposes of the Anglo-Saxon race. He also expressed a hope that the people who might be discovered inhabiting the land would not be forgotten, and that some successful missionary effort would be made to secure them from the calamities which would otherwise come upon them.

MR. CRAWFORD said that Mr. Stuart's accounts of his discoveries were beyond all praise. He did not know how the Society was to reward him.

Mr. Stuart had received their medal, and, if there were precedent for it, he thought he should have it again. Mr. Stuart was a bold, enterprising man, full of sound judgment and great discretion, otherwise he could not have so succeeded. Australia was a very valuable country. The fact that it produced five or six millions sterling worth of wool showed its importance, but the production of wool would have its limits—beyond a certain degree from the equator the sheep could not thrive. Australia was excellent for the production of wool, and for gold, but the gold was diminishing, and, he must say, he agreed with those who preferred New Zealand to Australia for the purpose of colonisation.

The CHAIRMAN then congratulated the Meeting on the interesting nature of the papers read, and the discussions upon them. He pointed out the great progress which had already taken place in Australia, and trusted that their acquaintance with its vast territory would be followed by its occupation by a large population, the extension of civilization, and advance of the arts of peace.

The Meeting was then adjourned to Dec. 9th.

*Third Meeting, Monday, December 9th, 1861.*

LORD ASHBURTON, PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATIONS.—*The Rev. Charles J. Armistead ; Lieut. Langham Rokeby, R.N. ; Don Ramon de Silva Ferro ; E. Brown Fitton ; Edward Lane ; J. Harrison Watson ; and James A. Youl, Esqrs., were presented upon their election.*

ELECTIONS.—*Lord Claude Hamilton ; Captain G. Towers Hilliard ; Sir Christopher Rawlinson ; the Rev. Edward J. Shepherd ; Douglas Henty ; Thomas Hood Hood ; Edward Lawrence ; Robert Low ; William Macpherson ; Henry Martin ; David Ricardo ; and C. Douglas Shepherd, Surg. R.N., Esqrs., were elected Fellows.*

EXHIBITIONS.—Logarithmic tables belonging to Mungo Park, accompanied by MS. calculations lately procured on the Niger, and presented by the Foreign Office. Several photographs of ‘Boobies,’—the original inhabitants of Fernando Po,—taken by two Spanish officers, and forwarded by Captain Bedingfeld, R.N., F.R.G.S., were also exhibited.

The PRESIDENT called attention to the remarkable care with which Mungo Park’s astronomical tables had been preserved by the Africans into whose hands they had fallen. The scraps of calculations and manuscript had been compared with a volume of Mungo Park’s MSS. in the possession of Mr. Murray, the publisher, and the handwriting had been identified.

The Papers read were—

1. *The British Settlements in Western Africa.* By Colonel LUKE SMYTH O’CONNOR, C.B., F.R.G.S., late Governor of the Gambia.

THIS was a short and slight sketch of the rise and progress of the Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Cape Coast settlements, accompanied by